

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 34/17/92

Distr: UA/SC

UA 124/92 Possible Extrajudicial Execution

22 April 1992

GUATEMALA: Pedro RAGUEZ, aged 22

Amnesty International has recently learned of the killing of an indigenous campesino (peasant), Pedro Raguez, carried out on 9 April 1992 by two leaders of the Patrullas de Autodefensa Civil (PAC), Civil Defence Patrols [civilian agents of the armed forces]. The killing took place in the cantón (hamlet) of Xoljuyú, San Pedro Jocopilas, Department of El Quiché, in circumstances which suggest his extrajudicial execution.

According to sources in Guatemala, Pedro Raguez was near his home in the cantón of Xoljuyú, when he was attacked by two local PAC leaders, who stabbed him repeatedly and then shot him through the head with a tiro de gracia (a finishing shot to the head). Pedro Raguez had reportedly only recently returned to the cantón for the Easter holidays from Guatemala City. He had fled the cantón, after being threatened and intimidated by the leaders of the PAC because he refused to participate in the civil patrols. Relatives believe his killing may have been linked to his refusal to participate in the civil patrols.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Article 34 of the Guatemalan Constitution, which recognizes the right to freedom of association, states that no-one may be forced to serve in self defence groups.

The authorities maintain the patrols are voluntary, but Amnesty International knows of scores of cases where peasants who have not wished to do patrol service have been labelled "subversives" by the army and subjected to harassment, death threats, "disappearances" and extrajudicial execution. The abuses have been carried out by uniformed soldiers as well as by men in plain clothes believed to be members of the security forces or acting under their orders.

President Jorge Serrano Elías came to power in January 1991. During his presidential campaign he had pledged to ensure protection of human rights. However, Amnesty International remains seriously concerned at continuing human rights violations in Guatemala, including extrajudicial executions, death threats, torture and "disappearances". Even in cases where the identity of the perpetrators is unclear, the choice of victim and the manner in which the abuses have been carried out frequently suggest the involvement of members of the official security forces.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the alleged killing of Pedro Raguez in circumstances suggesting his extrajudicial execution;
- urging that a full and impartial investigation be initiated immediately into his killing and that the results be made public;
- urging that those found to be responsible be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

1. President of the Republic
S.E. Jorge Serrano Elías
Presidente de la República de Guatemala

Palacio Nacional

Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Telegrams: Presidente Serrano, Guatemala, Guatemala

Telexes: 5331 CAPRES GU

Faxes: + 502 2 537472; + 502 519702

[Salutation: Excelentísimo Sr. Presidente / Dear President]

2. Minister of Interior

Lic. Fernando Hurtado Prem
Ministro de Gobernación
Ministerio de Gobernación
Despacho Ministerial, Of. No.8
Palacio Nacional
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Telexes: 5085 MINGOB GU

Faxes: + 502 2 518105

[Salutation: Señor Ministro / Dear Minister]

3. Minister of Defence

Gral. José García Samayoa
Ministro de Defensa
Ministerio de Defensa
Palacio Nacional
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Telegrams: Ministro Defensa, Guatemala, Guatemala

Telexes: 5361 COMGUA GU

Faxes: + 502 2 537472

[Salutation: Señor Ministro / Dear Minister]

4. Commander of El Quiché Military Base

Sr. Comandante
Comandante
Base Militar No. 20
Santa Cruz del Quiché, El Quiché
GUATEMALA

Telegrams: Sr Comandante, Base Militar 20, Santa Cruz del Quiche, El Quiche, Guatemala

[Salutation: Señor Comandante / Dear Commander]

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

President of the Human Rights Commission of Congress

Lic. Oliverio García Rodas
Presidente
Comisión de Derechos Humanos
Congreso Nacional de la República
9 Av. 9-48, Zona 1
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Council of Indigenous

Communities "We are all Equal"

Consejo de Comunidades Etnicas
"Runujel Junam" (CERJ)
5a Avenida 3-13, Zona 5
Santa Cruz del Quiché
El Quiché, GUATEMALA

Human Rights Procurator

Lic. Ramiro de León Carpio
Procurador de Derechos Humanos
Avenida Simeón Cañas 10-60 Zona 2,
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Daily newspaper

Diario 'Prensa Libre'
13 Calle 9-31, 5o Nivel,
Edificio Prensa Libre Zona 1,
Guatemala, GUATEMALA

and to diplomatic representatives of Guatemala in your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 3 June 1992.